

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06739 161359Z
ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7423
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 6739

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SHUM, CSCE, UR
SUBJ: MOSCOW'S REFUSENIKS AND THE SHCHARANSKIY CASE

REF: MOSCOW 6025 (NOTAL)

1. IN THE LAST WEEK, THREE OF MOSCOW'S LEADING REFUSENIKS HAVE BEEN REPEATEDLY INTERVIEWED BY THE KGB AT LEFORTOVO PRISON. THE MEN INVOLVED ARE AZBEL, BRAYLOVSKIY AND FAYN. WE ARE TOLD THAT EACH WAS INTERVIEWED BY THE KGB FOR ABOUT TEN HOURS ON AT LEAST ONE DAY LAST WEEK AND ALL HAVE BEEN SUMMONED FOR ADDITIONAL INTERROGATIONS. THE KGB REPORTEDLY TOLD EACH MAN THAT HIS INTERROGATION CONCERNED THE CASE OF ANATOLIY SHCHARANSKIY. ALL THREE WERE ASKED DETAILED QUESTIONS ABOUT SHCHARANSKIY'S FRIENDS IN THE USSR AND ABROAD, HIS ACTIVITIES AND LINKS WITH THE WEST. (AS FAR AS WE KNOW, NONE WAS ASKED ABOUT SHCHARANSKIY'S RELATIONS WITH EMBOFFS.)

2. THOSE INTERVIEWED ASSUMED THAT THEY HAD BEEN CHOSEN BECAUSE THEY WERE ACTIVE IN ORGANIZING THE RECENTLY CON-
CLUDED FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE SUNDAY
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SEMINAR (MOSCOW 5374). THEY REPORTEDLY FEEL THAT THE AUTHORITIES WERE TRYING TO COLLECT ON A DEBT; THAT SINCE THE AUTHORITIES HAD ALLOWED THE SEMINAR TO TAKE PLACE WITHOUT ANY HARASSMENT, THE DISSIDENTS NOW OWE THEM A LITTLE COOPERATION IN RETURN. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, IN NO CASE WAS THIS LINKAGE MADE EXPLICIT, AND ONLY WITH FAYN WAS ANY THREAT MADE. IN HIS CASE, WE ARE TOLD, THE

AUTHORITIES SAID THAT COOPERATION NOW WOULD PROBABLY PRODUCE AN EXIT VISA FOR HIM WHILE NON-COOPERATION COULD RESULT IN HIS SUFFERING THE SAME FATE AS SHCHARANSKIY.

3. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, NONE OF THE THREE GAVE THEIR INTERROGATORS MUCH INFORMATION. AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, NONE OF THE REFUSENIKS WAS ABLE TO GLEAN ANY INFORMATION FROM THEIR INTERROGATORS ABOUT THE PRECISE CHARGES WHICH SHCHARANSKIY FACES, NOR ABOUT THE TIMING OF A POSSIBLE TRIAL.

4. IN ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT POSSIBLY RELATED TO THE SHCHARANSKIY CASE, MAL'VA LANDA, A WELL-KNOWN DISSIDENT AND ASSOCIATE OF SHCHARANSKIY, GOES ON TRIAL MAY 16 ON CHARGES OF HAVING WILLFULLY DESTROYED STATE PROPERTY. THE CHARGE IS THE RESULT OF A FIRE THAT TOOK PLACE IN HER FLAT SOME MONTHS AGO. THE FIRE WAS REPORTEDLY AN ACCIDENT, BUT THE AUTHORITIES, INSTEAD OF INVESTIGATING ITS CAUSE, TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO INVESTIGATE LANDA AND FOUND A PRETEXT TO CHARGE HER.

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